

## Functional Workplace and Return-to-Work Assessments

- **Functional and Cognitive Work Capacity Assessment**
- **Ergonomic Assessment**
- **Ergonomic Risk Assessment**
- **Physical and Cognitive Demands Analysis**
- **Functional and Cognitive Abilities Evaluation**
- **Job Site Assessment**

*\* Assessment may be used for litigation processes and to determine benefit entitlements.*

### Functional and Cognitive Work Capacity Assessments

The Functional Work Capacity Assessment and Cognitive Work Capacity Assessment take place at a work site. They provide information about the physical and cognitive demands of a job and insights on whether the demands of the job match with the abilities and restrictions of the participant.

Recommendations are made that can include suitability and accommodations (if applicable) to facilitate a safe job match, changes to the work equipment, environment and/or work flow, strategies related to safe body mechanics, work organization, work pacing, or the addition of assistive devices to enable the participant to perform the essential job duties safely.

Functional/Cognitive Work Capacity Assessments are particularly useful for participants who have reached maximum medical recovery following an injury and

have questions or concerns about:

- The suitability of returning to their pre-injury job (with or without accommodations).
- The suitability of other jobs that are offered (with or without accommodations) if they are unable to return to their original pre-injury job.
- Managing the job demands after returning to work.

## **Ergonomic Assessment**

An ergonomic assessment provides information about the physical aspects of a job, task or environment, including workstations, tools and equipment used to perform job duties to accommodate a specific injury or disability of a participant. Ergonomic assessments are useful to determine how to reduce the risk of injury or re-injury for a specific person returning to work, and addressing reports of discomfort.

Recommendations made by the Assessor may be related to (but not limited to):

- Modifying the worker's body mechanics
- Modifying the workstation or work area
- Education on how to utilize the adjustable features of existing equipment
- Modifying tools or other existing equipment
- The provision of assistive devices or additional equipment

## **Ergonomic Risk Assessment**

An ergonomic risk assessment provides information about the level of ergonomic risks (such as high force, high repetition, awkward postures, etc.) to the majority of the workforce who perform a specific job (or jobs), to help minimize the risk of injury.

An ergonomic risk assessment is particularly useful when:

- An employer is interested in reducing the rate of injuries in the workplace.
- There are concerns regarding the risk of injury associated with performing a task of a specific job.
- There are specific complaints related to safety and/or discomfort performing a particular job and assistance is needed in determining the cause and identifying areas for improvement.
- Changes to work processes are being made and an employer needs to ensure that ergonomic risks are not created by the changes.

## **Physical and Cognitive Demands Analysis**

A Physical Demands Analysis and a Cognitive Demands Analysis are assessments to determine the essential duties of a specific job, including an objective measure of the physical or cognitive, psychosocial and behavioural demands and expectations of a specific job. This assists referring agents to help ensure applicants possess the abilities to perform the required demands of a job and identify appropriate accommodations when needed.

The outcome of a Physical Demands Analysis involves a detailed analysis of the objectively measured physical job demands, as well as recommendations to modify the role and/or physical demands to suit a participant's specific needs, as applicable.

The outcome of a Cognitive Demands Analysis involves a detailed analysis of the objectively measured cognitive, behavioural and psychosocial job demands, as well as recommendations to modify the role and/or demands to suit a participant's specific needs.

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## Functional and Cognitive Functional Abilities Evaluations

An FAE/FCE or CFAE is requested when evaluating the limitations of a participant's physical or cognitive abilities, usually as it relates to return-to-work situations. This evaluation is particularly useful for developing suitable job goals, strategies and accommodations for a participant who has sustained an injury in order to provide measured progress and guidance for rehabilitation programs, and to determine job suitability.

Functional Abilities/Capacity Evaluation (FAE /FCE) may include (but is not necessarily limited to):

- Intake interview and review of medical history
- Functional screen
- Strength testing
- Postural or positional testing
- Manual dexterity testing
- Reliability and consistency of effort
- Aerobic testing
- Recommendations on workday tolerance

Cognitive Functional Abilities Evaluation (CFAE) provides information about a participant's cognitive functioning in addition to the functional testing described above. Cognitive testing may include (but is not necessarily limited to) standardized and non-standardized tests of the following cognitive functions:

- Attention
- Memory
- Mental flexibility
- Organization
- Problem solving

- Abstract reasoning
- Processing
- Executive functioning
- Tolerance to multiple demands and tasks
- Psychosocial factors
- Sensory factors

## **Job Site Assessment**

Job Site Assessment examines the essential and non-essential job duties, work environment, equipment used, and qualifications of a particular job or multiple jobs at a workplace. A general overview of the job and general working conditions and environment is provided.

A Job Site Assessment is particularly useful to assist with developing a return-to-work program for a particular job where detailed information on the physical or cognitive demands is not required.